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TOT: 01 OCT 91

CIA

TO: NPIC, DIRNSA, DEPT OF STATE//INR/DSTAD, DIA WASHINGTON DC,
TREASURY DEPT, SECRET SERVICE//ID, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION,
WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM, USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM.

TEXT

PASS: NSA FOR ZKZK OO DLS DE (FOR NSOC).

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WARNING: INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE.

DIST: 01 OCTOBER 1991

COUNTRY: CHILE

Declassified and
Approved for Release
July 2000

SECRET

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SUBJ: MILITARY REACTION TO THE CONTRERAS/ESPINOZA ARRESTS

DOI: [REDACTED] SEPTEMBER 1991

TEXT: 1. [REDACTED]

2. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THE ARMY LEADERSHIP HAS MANIFESTED NO PARTICULAR CONCERN REGARDING THE INDICTMENT AND ARREST ON 22 SEPTEMBER OF RETIRED GENERAL MANUEL ((CONTRERAS)) AND ACTIVE-DUTY COLONEL PEDRO ((ESPINOZA)) IN THE LETELIER-MOFFITT MURDER CASE. [REDACTED] THE ARMY BELIEVES THE ARRESTS REPRESENT ONLY THE BEGINNING OF A LONG LEGAL STRUGGLE WHOSE OUTCOME IS UNCERTAIN AND THEREFORE NOT IMMINENTLY THREATENING TO ARMY COMMANDER IN CHIEF GENERAL AUGUSTO ((PINOCHET)) UGARTE OR OTHERS IN THE ARMY HIGH COMMAND.

3. [REDACTED] THE ARMY WAS SCRUPULOUSLY CORRECT IN REFRAINING FROM INTERFERENCE, AND IN FACT WAS HELPING, IN THE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT'S EFFORT TO EXECUTE THE CONTRERAS AND ESPINOZA ARREST WARRANTS ISSUED BY JUDGE ADOLFO ((BANADOS)) ON 20 SEPTEMBER.

[REDACTED] CONTRERAS AND ESPINOZA WERE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY WITHOUT INCIDENT OR DIFFICULTY. [REDACTED] PINOCHET MUST HAVE BEEN CONSULTED BY GENERALS RIQUELME AND JULIO AND MUST HAVE GIVEN HIS PERSONAL APPROVAL FOR THE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT TO BE INFORMED BY THE ARMY OF CONTRERAS', AND ESPECIALLY ESPINOZA'S, WHEREABOUTS.

4. [REDACTED]

5. [REDACTED]

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7.

CHILE'S MILITARY LEADERSHIP HAS NO PLANS TO REACT OR INTERVENE FOLLOWING THE ARRESTS OF CONTRERAS AND ESPINOZA. MILITARY OFFICERS AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE WERE SURPRISED BY THE ARRESTS, BUT REMAIN CONFIDENT THAT CONTRERAS AND ESPINOZA WILL BE CLEARED. THESE OFFICERS BELIEVE THE ARRESTS WERE DICTATED BY U.S. GOVERNMENT PRESSURE. THE CHILEAN

MILITARY PLANS TO STAY OUT OF THE CASE WHILE IT WORKS ITS WAY THROUGH THE CHILEAN JUDICIAL PROCESS. MOREOVER, MANY MILITARY OFFICIALS AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE BELIEVE THE CASE WILL STALL IN CHILEAN COURTS FOR SEVERAL YEARS BEFORE ANY FINAL DISPOSITION IS MADE. COMMENT: CONTRERAS AND ESPINOZA HAVE HAD OVER 12 YEARS TO PREPARE TO CONTEST THIS CASE, AND IT IS UNLIKELY THEY WILL FACE ANY PUNISHMENT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS. IT ALSO IS LIKELY THAT ANY PROOF OF THEIR GUILT--IF IT EVER EXISTED--HAS DISAPPEARED, AND ESTABLISHING PROOF IN A CASE LIKE THIS--ESPECIALLY ONE SO DATED--IS DIFFICULT UNDER THE BEST CONDITIONS. IN ANY CASE, BOTH WILL BE VERY WELL REPRESENTED IN THE LEGAL PROCESS.)